



Satellite image with enhanced low cloud-top temperatures (degrees C) for 7:15 a.m. EDT (NOAA)

Agricultural Weather Highlights - Thursday - January 9, 2003

- ***In the West***, showers are returning to ***northern California***, but mild, mostly dry weather favors fieldwork elsewhere in the region. Drought-related concerns from the ***Southwest to the central Rockies*** include low reservoir levels, meager mountain snow packs, and stressed rangelands.
- ***On the Plains***, cool weather is overspreading the ***northern half of the region***, accompanied by high winds. The ***Plains'*** winter wheat has experienced little stress for the season to date, but a return to normal (cold, breezy) conditions is a concern on the drought-affected ***northern and central High Plains***, especially given the absence of a protective snow cover.
- ***In the Corn Belt***, cooler air is beginning to arrive, attended by high winds across the ***upper Midwest***. Little precipitation has fallen for more than two months across the ***northern and western Corn Belt***, where dryness remains a concern, but soil moisture remains mostly favorable in the ***Midwestern winter wheat belt***, including the ***Ohio Valley***.
- ***In the South***, warm, dry weather is promoting a limited return to fieldwork, but some winter grain fields remain unfavorably soggy.

Outlook: A cold front will sweep through the ***eastern U.S.***, introducing below-normal temperatures to most areas ***east of the Rockies***. Farther west, a persistent upper-air disturbance will maintain the threat of showers in the ***Southwest***, while a weakening Pacific storm system will provide another round of rain and snow to ***northern California, the Great Basin, and central Rockies***. Elsewhere, periods of light snow are likely across the ***Great Lakes and Northeastern States***, while scattered rain showers will linger across ***Florida's peninsula***. The NWS 6-10 day outlook for January 14-18 calls for drier-than-normal weather ***west of the Rockies***, in ***southern Texas***, and across the ***Midwest and Northeast***. Above-normal precipitation is expected throughout the ***Plains and Florida***. Below-normal temperatures are expected ***east of the Rockies***, while warmer-than-normal weather will be confined to the ***Southwest***.

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